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000 had adopted as most likely to afford the easiest line for a railway, so that it was by this route that we set out to meet him.

As far as Ch'ü-ching there are two alternative roads, so Watts-Jones, leaving on the 30th March, took the main road through Ma-lung Chou, while I, starting four days later, went by a somewhat less frequented route through Yi-liang Hsien and Lu-liang Chou.

Ryder had so far failed to get the longitude of Yün-nan Fu from Bhamo, owing partly to the difficulty of getting a strong enough current over this distance of 500 miles of telegraph wire, and partly to the frequent occurrence of breaks, and to the general neglect of duty by the telegraph clerks, under the slack administration of the stout Manchu gentleman who presided over this department[1].

Ryder therefore decided to stay on in hopes of fixing this most important point. As it turned out, he waited there a month and had then to give it up as a bad job. However we were luckily able to get satisfactory observations in the following year.

On the 3rd of April I was able to get away and started off across the Yün-nan Fu plain. Several things here strike the traveller arriving from the west as new and peculiar. 312 The rows of cypress trees along the irrigation embankments are one of the most conspicuous features of this [406] part of the country; and the curious wheels which, worked by hand, draw the water up from the lakes and ponds into the irrigation channels, are not found in the plains of western Yün-nan, where nearly all the water is running. It is true indeed that these wheels are used in Yün-nan Hsien and other places west of the capital, but I have never seen them west of Ta-li.

• 493 But what struck me as most extraordinary was the use of carts. These I certainly did not expect to see in western China. I subsequently found them in use in nearly all the plains of eastern Yün-nan. They are very small and are drawn by one bullock or buffalo. They are only used for

[1] Mr Jensen was in no way responsible for the frequent breaks which occur in the Yün-nan telegraphs. His work was to keep the electrical instruments in order. The upkeep of the actual telegraph wire is in the hands of Chinese, who make as much money out of it as they can.

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farming operations and are not employed as a means of transport along the roads. This is no doubt owing to the impossibility in most places of taking them from one plain to another, though by a little construction of roads it would not be difficult to open a good deal of eastern Yün-nan to wheeled traffic. On the whole it is decidedly less hilly than the western part of the province, though in places, such for instance as the road from Wei-ning to Tung-ch'uan, there are as steep hills as I have seen anywhere.

My Chinese followers were much amused by the uncouth dialect of the inhabitants of the provincial capital. One would expect to hear the purest Chinese spoken in the chief city of the province, but such is not the case. They have a peculiar way of speaking which I believe they, as natives of the capital, consider to be the standard of excellence for the province, but this opinion is not shared by other Chinamen either of Yün-nan or of other parts of the empire.

My own impression, derived from hearing many Lo-los speak Chinese, is that their speech is simply Chinese spoken with a strong Lo-lo accent. The Yün-nan Fu plain was, I believe, formerly a Lo-lo country, and there are many families of Lo-lo origin still living there. Whatever may be the truth about this, it is needless to say that the present inhabitants of the city would only receive with derision any suggestion which imputed to them a Lo-lo ancestry or a Lo-lo accent. This dialect is confined to the people of K'un-ming Hsien, the Hsien district of Yün-nan Fu.

Our first march out from the capital took us to the small plain of Ch'i-tien. We made the usual late start, which I have always found it difficult to avoid in leaving a town after a few days' halt. Consequently, as the march was 18 miles and entailed crossing a range of hills, we did not reach our halting-place till after dark. I was now doing my own surveying, as Lachman Jadu, the surveyor who had been with me so far, stayed with Captain Ryder, so as eventually to return to India with him to help in compiling the maps.

On the 4th April, after crossing a low range, we descended to a fine lake called Yang-tsung Hai, and leaving